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Leading learning and skills

# Herefordshire and Worcestershire Learning and Skills Council Annual Plan 2006-07

## May 2006

Of interest to National, Regional and  
Local Learning and Skills Colleagues

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## Our Vision

*We want Herefordshire and Worcestershire to be a place where all individuals have the opportunity to learn, develop skills and realise their full potential. Where learning and skills contribute to the well-being of individuals, families, communities and a strong and vibrant economy.*

In achieving this vision, we must ensure that:

### Employer provision:

- recognises and responds to identified skills gaps and skills shortages;
- is responsive and flexible in meeting employer needs;
- adopts improved methodologies for learning delivery and assessment;
- is linked to high quality advice and improved regional brokerage arrangements;
- ensures better awareness of the learning and skills offer;
- secures increased levels of funding contribution from employers;
- increases levels of training and assessment activity taking place on employer premises;
- ensures the supply of a highly skilled workforce to meet the needs of the current and future economy.

### 14-19 provision:

- achieves further improvements in success rates – maintaining current position of being in the top 10% in the country;
- provides choice and breadth of opportunity for young people;
- responds to the equality and diversity agenda, ensuring no artificial barriers to learning or skills development exist;
- develops appropriate interventions to ensure that those at risk or from vulnerable groups have equal opportunity to be fully engaged in learning;
- allows for smooth transition between academic and vocational learning pathways;
- enables young people to develop the range of generic skills critical to their future success within the workplace;
- provides access to high quality information, advice and guidance about learning progression and career opportunities.

### Adult provision:

- is made accessible to all;
- ensures individuals have free access to basic skills and first Level 2 provision and subsidised support at Level 3;
- provides choice and breadth of opportunity;
- enables individuals to develop new skills and realise their potential;
- seeks to widen participation and re-engages individuals in learning;
- ensures that those most disadvantaged are supported in their skills development;
- enables individuals to see the personal benefit of better skills and are willing to invest in their own development.

Quality provision:

- is to be good or outstanding quality, satisfactory inspection grades will not be good enough;
- achieves independent inspection outcomes which judge the quality of provision to be in the top 10% in the country;
- enables access to a network of specialist providers and Centres of Excellence;
- achieves very high levels of learner success - within top 10% in the country;
- is resourced by high quality and up-to-date capital and equipment;
- ensures that teaching staff are highly skilled and maintain the currentness of their knowledge of industry practices.

LSC capacity:

- is responsive to changing needs and context for working;
- contributes to effective partnership working;
- is better informed and has timely access to data and analyses;
- fully utilises the human capital of the non Executive;
- secures the full integration of Shropshire with Herefordshire and Worcestershire LSCs.
- performs a leading key role in ensuring that skills remain a high priority on our partners' agenda;
- contributes a key role in Economic Development.

This Annual Plan for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2006/07, provides an analysis of the local context in terms of learning and skills and the current and future needs of the local economy. In order to achieve our vision, it lays out the key actions to be addressed during 2006/07 set against a framework of national, regional and local priorities.

Like many areas, change has an almost constant presence within the learning and skills agenda. During 2005/06 a number of important policy documents were published which will have an impact both on the nature of learning provision and the way we work.

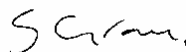
New working arrangements will come into operation within the LSC during 2006/07. The two LSC offices in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and in Shropshire are to be merged, allowing for improved co-ordination of activity across the western half of the region. Within this arrangement, two dedicated Partnership Teams (one for Herefordshire and one for Worcestershire) will be established. Other functions will adopt a regional approach to working.

In moving forward to achieve our vision, we recognise the importance of partnership working and the contribution that our key partners can make in realising that achievement. Outcomes from the local Strategic Area Review have been integrated within business planning processes and arising recommendations are included within this plan. Through collaborative working we will seek to ensure that the 14-19 skills agenda is embedded within the work of the Children's and Young People's Strategic Partnership Boards and the wider skills agenda within Local Area Agreements.

We hope that this document will inspire you to work with us in achieving our vision for the future of Learning and Skills within Herefordshire and Worcestershire.



**Neil Pringle**  
**Acting Chairman**



**Sharon Gray**  
**Area Director**

## **Our National Priorities**

We have published our second Annual Statement of Priorities<sup>1</sup> which will take us further forward in our aim of transformation. Our six priorities for 2006/07 are to:

1. Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities.
2. Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults.
3. Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change.
4. Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help individuals into jobs.
5. Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services.
6. Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.

## **Our Regional Priorities for the West Midlands Region**

The regional priorities outlined demonstrate the LSC's contribution to the work of the Regional Skills Partnership and the delivery and success of the Regional Economic Strategy<sup>2</sup> by:

1. Using a data driven approach to develop a detailed understanding of the changing nature of the labour market in terms of the supply of and demand for skills.
2. Aligning the supply of training and related support to the needs of individuals.
3. Matching the supply of training and related business support to the demands of employers and the wider economy.
4. Ensuring that employers and individuals fulfil their role in the investment in skills and training.

## **Partnership Working**

To achieve these priorities, the LSC in the West Midlands will continue to work in partnership with all stakeholders across the region through the alignment of plans and funding. Key partners include:

- Advantage West Midlands (AWM)
- Jobcentre Plus
- Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)
- Higher Education Institutions / Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
- Business Link

## **Learning Priorities – the impact on Providers**

Colleges and providers are at the heart of delivering these regional priorities. Actions agreed in their three year development plan will address the priorities outlined in the local LSC annual plan and will ensure that funding is focused upon key areas. Successful delivery depends upon high quality provision that is:

- closely engaged with employers to understand their needs;
- aligned to the skills priorities of the region;
- able to meet the required range of specialist skills across the region;
- central to the delivery of the regional and local economic agenda;
- aligned with the work of other partners to deliver an accessible and comprehensive service to employers and individuals;
- able to develop and exploit opportunities for leveraging in increased levels of investment by employers into training;
- providing learning and skills opportunities that lead to nationally recognised qualifications and opportunities for progression;
- committed to continuous quality improvement and the attainment of recognised accreditation standards.

## **Planning Priorities for 2006/07 – West Midlands Region**

The following planning principles were agreed through the Regional LSC/Further Education (FE)/Association of Colleges (AoC) Consultative Forum to be applied against the allocations for 2006/07:

- a minimum of 60% accredited Skills for Life provision as a milestone towards the 80% target for 2007/08;
- a maximum of 10% partnership, sub contracted or franchised provision (if current level is below 10%, there should be no increase);
- a minimum of 10% of the Adult participation budget, at the level of the individual (general) FE college, to support activity that delivers full Level 2 qualifications to part-time adults, with a year on year increase in funding committed to part-time adult full Level 2 provision (guide of 5%);
- the local LSC will agree with each provider a proportion of this funding that will be committed to Train to Gain type activity;
- increase in participation of adults on full Level 3 qualifications to a 10% minimum in areas of Specialisms/Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs).

## **Our Targets**

### **Under priority 1, for young people:**

- Increase the proportion of 19 year-olds who achieve at least Level 2 by 3 percentage points between 2004 and 2006, and a further two percentage points between 2006 and 2008, and improve attainment at Level 3.

Nationally we need an additional 31,000 young people to gain a Level 2 in 2005/06 compared to 2003/04 and a further 22,000 in 2007/08 compared to 2005/06.

As a contribution towards the national target, locally we need an additional 2,079 people to gain a Level 2 in 2007/08 compared to 2005/06.

### **Under priority 2, for adults:**

- Reduce by at least 40 per cent the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010.

Nationally, in 2006/07 we need to increase the numbers of full Level 2 achievements through Further Education and Work-based Learning to 117,000 [NB excludes National Employer Service (NES) and Train to Gain elements]. In addition the roll out of the National Employer Training Programme will increase the LSC contribution to this target.

As a contribution towards the national target, locally we plan to deliver 1,001 Level 2 achievements through Further Education and 425 Level 2 Apprenticeship Framework achievement s through Work-based Learning in 2006/07.

In addition, we will also deliver 358 **first** full Level 2 achievements through Train to Gain.

### **Under priority 2, for adults:**

- Improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010, with a milestone of 1.5 million in 2007.

Our regional target is for 170,350 individuals to improve their basic skills by 2006-07. By September 2005, an estimated 120,478 achievements had been secured.

As a contribution towards the national target local contribution towards this target is for 20,792 individuals to improve their basic skills by 2006-07. By January 2006, an estimated 13,743 achievements had been secured. The remaining 7,049 will be achieved in the two year period to September 2007.

### **Underpinning both priorities 1 and 2, for Apprenticeships:**

- The LSC has agreed a new Performance Indicator for Apprenticeships. The aim is for 75 per cent more people to complete their apprenticeships in 2007/08, compared to 2002/03.

Nationally we aim to raise the number of completions to 70,000 in 2006/07 supporting the achievement of Level 2 and Level 3 qualification targets.

As a contribution towards the national target, locally we aim to raise the number of completions to 1,051 in 2006/07.

We also work with key partners to contribute to the following targets:

- Increase the proportion of young people and adults achieving a Level 3 qualification.

- Reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training by two percentage points by 2010.
- Increase participation in Higher Education towards 50 per cent of those aged 18 to 30 by 2010.

## Our Values

Our values set out for us the way we work.

- **Trust:** the LSC has to be world-class at partnership and so we believe trust must be at the heart of the LSC.
- **Expertise:** we demonstrate expertise and true leadership in every aspect of our work. We have complete understanding of the communities we serve and of what are needed by business in terms of current and future skills.
- **Ambition:** we are ambitious for ourselves, in the goals and objectives we set, but more importantly we are ambitious for the communities we serve, for employers and for individuals in education and training.
- **Urgency:** we want to bring drive and urgency to the learning and skills sector, to tackle long-standing issues swiftly and professionally and to be responsive and fast moving.

Together, our four values will ensure the LSC can provide leadership and direction at a time of great change.

Our plan sets out how we will deliver our national and regional priorities in a local context highlighting what actions will be critically important in local delivery and what our contribution to the national targets will be.



## **A Context for Delivery – Herefordshire and Worcestershire**

### **Overview**

The sub-regional area covered by the LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire includes two County Council areas: Herefordshire, which is a unitary authority; and Worcestershire, which comprises five District Council areas and one Borough Council – Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Worcester City, Wychavon, Wyre Forest and Redditch,

The two counties have a mixture of rural and urban areas. Herefordshire is predominantly rural with concentrations of population in a number of market towns and Hereford City. In Worcestershire, rural areas are more extensive in the south, west and north-west of the county. The remainder of the county, although interspersed by rural pockets, is more urban, particularly Worcester City and the districts to the north-east of the county adjoining Birmingham.

The sub-region is included in two of the regeneration areas identified by the Regional Development Agency – Advantage West Midlands. The Central Technology Belt, which runs along the M5 corridor from central Birmingham to Malvern in south Worcestershire and the Rural Regeneration Zone that includes all of Herefordshire and a very small area to the north-west of Worcestershire.

### **Demographic Profile**

The estimated total residential population in Herefordshire and Worcestershire is 734,977<sup>3</sup>. The overall size of the total residential population is projected to grow by 3% to 2014<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, the composition of the resident population in terms of the proportion of young people, people of working age and people who are no longer economically active is projected to change.

Population density decreases as you move westward across the sub-region. In Herefordshire, the estimated population density in 2006 is 82 people per square kilometre, whereas in Worcestershire, the estimated population density is 319 people<sup>4</sup>. Herefordshire is one of the most sparsely populated counties in England.

**Young people** - Currently, young people aged 14-19 account for 8% and 16-18 year olds 4% of the total residential population within Herefordshire and Worcestershire<sup>3</sup>. Future projections to 2014 indicate a steady decline in numbers that equates to 7% shrinkage in the 14-19 year old cohort and 5% shrinkage of the 16-18 year old cohort by 2014<sup>3</sup>. Young people will therefore account for a reduced proportion of the total residential population in 2014 compared to 2006.

**Adult population** – The adult working age population (16-65 years old) accounts for 64% of the total residential population<sup>3</sup>. Future projections indicate that the size of this age-group is likely to remain virtually constant in terms of overall size up to 2014<sup>3</sup>.

**Population aged 60 years old and Over** - In 2004, almost 8,000 residents in the two counties reached the age of 65<sup>3</sup>. Using current economic activity rates as a guide (81%), potentially 6,500 people in this group were economically active and thus will have left the workforce<sup>5</sup>. This level of retirement represents a significant loss of skills and experience from the workforce, which in many instances will need to be replaced. Forecasts for the next ten years show that both the volume and proportion of the resident population reaching 65 will continue to grow<sup>3</sup>.

By 2014, the proportion of the population reaching 65 will have grown by close to one third (a 33% increase since 2004)<sup>3</sup>.

**Minority ethnic population** - The minority ethnic population in the two counties at 4%<sup>6</sup> accounts for a below average (regional and national) proportion of the resident population. There are two exceptions identified at a sub-county level in Redditch and

Worcester City where the minority ethnic population accounts for 7% and 6% of the resident district population respectively<sup>6</sup>.

**Migrant workers** – Increasingly, research evidence supports anecdotal comment about the growing dependency of some industrial sectors within the sub-region on migrant workers. Examples of this include the Food and Drink, Agricultural and Horticultural, Tourism and Leisure, Retail and Service industries. This migrant workforce and their dependents are generating increased pressures on public services including education provision and is believed to have contributed to a recent growth in the number of young people not engaged in education, employment or training.

#### **Skills Impact:**

Declining numbers of young people will generate an on-going need to review the sustainability of learning provision and to ensure that the breadth of opportunities continues to be available to all young people. This is of particular significance for rural areas where population density is lowest.

The ageing population will generate high levels of workforce replacement demand as an increasing proportion of the workforce retires. This replacement demand will generate a need for skilled workers across most industrial sectors.

High level of people retiring from the workforce is likely to result in the loss of experienced staff from the workforce. Appropriate steps need to be taken to ensure that adequate succession planning takes place.

The ageing population is also generating an increased demand for services e.g. adult care sector, which in turn is resulting in an increased need for skilled workers.

In order to meet learner and employer needs, provision will need to recognise and respond to the changing composition of the resident population.

As an increasingly significant workforce, there is a need to address the skills needs of migrant workers, including addressing communication barriers. Furthermore, collaborative action is needed to ensure that the impact and integration of migrant workers and their dependents is appropriately identified and supported.

#### **Industrial Profile**

Over the next ten years, the local workforce in Herefordshire and Worcestershire is forecast to require an extra 135,000 employees (equal to 40% of the current local workforce numbers) in order to meet internal and external business demands<sup>7</sup>. A significant proportion of this requirement for employees will be generated by the need to replace those leaving the workforce; replacement demand in Herefordshire and Worcestershire is estimated to be 120,000 employees by 2014<sup>7</sup>. The balance of need for employees will arise from a projected growth in the total workforce size.

In terms of volume of employment, current key sectors in Herefordshire and Worcestershire are Retail and Distribution, Manufacturing, Business Services, Hotels and Catering, Public Services and Construction.

Over the next ten years, employment forecasts show that a number of sectors (particularly Agriculture, Construction, Utilities, Engineering, Manufacturing and Public Administration and Defence) will experience shrinkage rather than growth in total workforce size. However, due to the need to replace employees who will leave the workforce during that period, there is a positive net requirement for skilled employees in these sectors.

For example, in spite of a forecast 13% shrinkage in the local Manufacturing sector workforce to 2014, the sector is estimated to lose 34% of its current workforce through

replacement demand and will therefore need to replace some of these employees<sup>7</sup>. Overall, this sector is anticipated to require an extra 10,000 employees by 2014<sup>7</sup>.

Other sectors are forecast to experience workforce growth, which in addition to replacement demand will generate a significant need for additional skilled employees. The Business Services, Retail and Distribution and Health and Social Care sectors account for over three quarters (76%) of total new workforce growth in the next ten years<sup>7</sup>.

Total gross value added (GVA) for Herefordshire and Worcestershire in 2003 (latest data) was £9,550 million, contributing 12% to the regional GVA figure of £77,797 million in 2003<sup>8</sup>.

### **Skills Impact:**

Priority Sectors for 2006/07:

Business and Professional Services; Construction; Health Sector; Adult Care; Childcare; Manufacturing and Engineering; Retail; Public Services; Food and Drink Cluster.

The changing industrial structure is likely to result in skills shortages and skills gaps across the range of industrial and service sectors.

The impact of replacement demand in terms of generating a need for additional skilled employees across all sectors is significant.

Strategies need to be developed in order to encourage individuals to delay retiring from the workforce, such strategies might include reskilling/upskilling interventions.

Some sectors experiencing shrinkage in overall workforce size report experiencing difficulty in attracting new / higher skilled employees, impacting on their capacity to meet replacement demand or realise new business opportunities.

Failure of business to attract and/or retain higher skilled employees is likely to impact on the capacity of businesses to improve GVA and/or expand into more knowledge intensive activities.

Low proportion of knowledge intensive and high value added industries across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This results in low skills equilibrium, where employers continue to try and compete on price rather than added value and knowledge. Ultimately this is likely to compound issues around low wage levels, particularly in Herefordshire.

### **Workforce Profile**

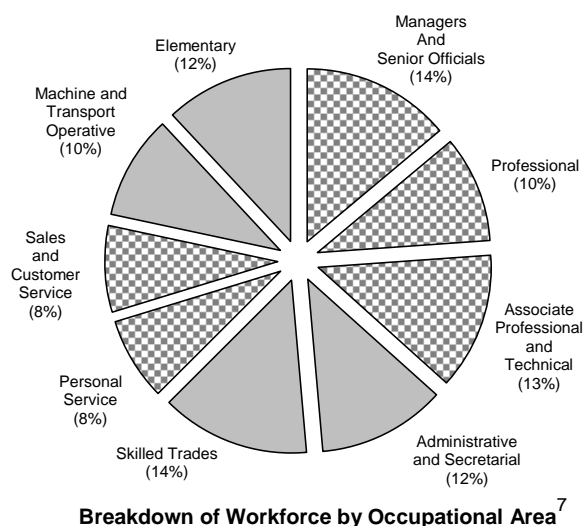
In total, 473,643 people were of working age (16-65 years old) in Herefordshire and Worcestershire in 2005<sup>3</sup>. By gender, this comprised 235,730 (49.8%) males and 237,913 (50.2%) females<sup>3</sup>.

***Economic Activity Rates and Unemployment*** - Of those individuals of working age (16-65 years old) in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, 81% were economically active in 2005 compared to 78% regionally<sup>5</sup>. By gender, 86% of males and 76% of females were economically active in the local area. This compares to a regional economic activity rate of 83% for males and 72% for females<sup>5</sup>.

Unemployment levels across the sub-region are low at 2.2%. This compares to a regional unemployment level of 4%<sup>9</sup>.

Current estimates (2005) indicate that 54% of individuals claiming Social Security benefits are individuals claiming Incapacity Benefit<sup>10</sup>.

**Occupational Breakdown** - By proportion, the occupational breakdown of the workforce in Herefordshire and Worcestershire in 2005 is illustrated below<sup>7</sup>.



Despite forecast shrinkage in total workforce size, future projections for the occupational areas (plain-shaded in the pie-chart) are for them to experience a positive demand for skilled individuals due to the need to replace those leaving the occupational area.

Future projections for the occupational areas (check-shaded in the pie-chart) are for them to increase in size due to both a growth in the total number of employees needed and the need arising to replace those leaving the occupational area.

In Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the occupational areas that are expected to experience the greatest net requirement (plus 25% or more of existing levels) are: Managers and Senior Officials; Professional; Associate Professional and Technical Services; Skilled Trades; Personal Service, and Sales & Customer Service Occupations<sup>7</sup>.

#### **Skills Impact:**

Changes within all sectors in terms of occupational composition, is likely to result in changing skills needs, skills shortages and skills gaps. Provision will need to be mindful of and responsive to such changes.

High levels of economic activity mean that the LSC and providers will need to engage with employers and through them the existing workforce if they are raise overall skills levels.

Leadership and management skills are likely to increase in importance for businesses.

Low levels of unemployment and projected reducing volumes of young people joining the workforce will mean that there will be an increasing premium placed on re-engaging those who are currently economically inactive. However, if this is to be realised, those individuals are likely to need to enhance their skills levels and thus employability.

As the value of highly skilled employees increases in the 'marketplace', levels of occupational mobility and migration may increase, potentially leading to displacement of existing skilled workforce.

#### **Social Profile – Disadvantaged Areas**

According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation for 2004, 8% of the Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Herefordshire and Worcestershire fall within the national 10% of most deprived areas<sup>11</sup>. This 8% includes areas in Worcester City, Redditch, Wyre Forest, Wychavon, Malvern Hills and Herefordshire<sup>11</sup>.

Of most note is Worcester City, where 18% of its SOAs are in the national 10% of most deprived areas in England<sup>11</sup>.

Initial analysis appears to indicate some correlation between those areas identified as most deprived and those containing the highest proportions of minority ethnic population.

### Skills Impact:

Lower than average skills levels and participation in learning in the local LSC area compared with overall population.

Need to invest in widening participation in learning in these disadvantaged areas.

Continued investment in Skills for Life and first Level 2 is required.

Low skills levels contribute significantly to socio-economic disadvantage and are contributory factors to a wider range of difficulties experienced by individuals, families and communities.

### Key Initiatives

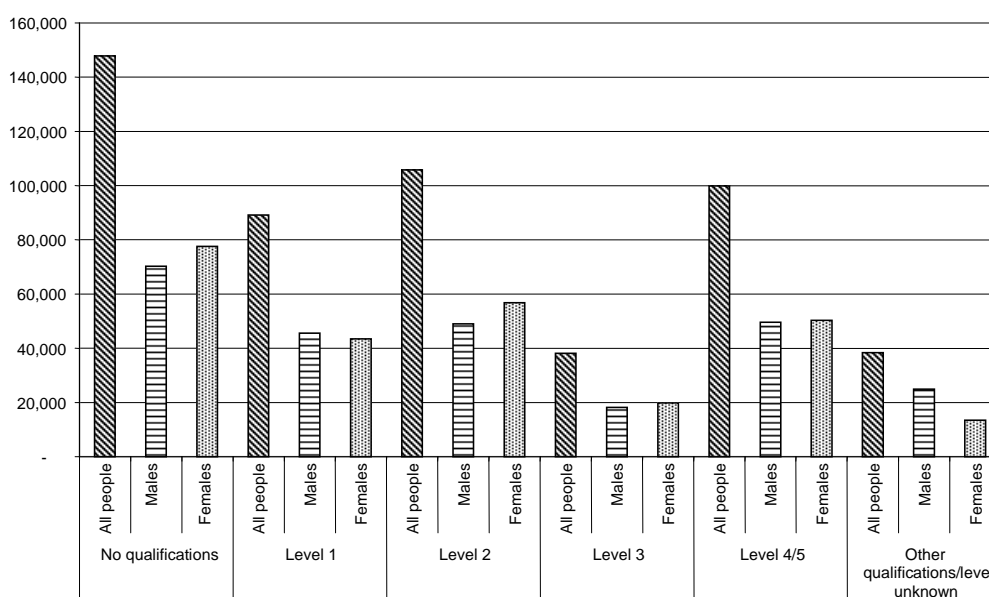
Key capital projects occurring within the local LSC area are likely to generate a number of skills issues. These projects include:

- Abbey Stadium, Redditch;
- Bromsgrove Technology Park;
- Edgar Street Grid / Hereford Learning Village, Hereford City;
- Leominster Enterprise Park;
- Malvern Hills Science Park;
- University of Worcester - new Library.

### Qualification / Skills Profile

**Qualification levels** – In terms of qualification attainment, Herefordshire and Worcestershire performs better than the regional average across all qualification levels. Over 50% of the working age population have at least a Level 2 qualification<sup>6</sup>. However, it is estimated that 28% of the working age population (16-65 years old) have no qualifications. Furthermore, 10% of people are believed to have only entry level literacy skills and almost 40% have only entry level numeracy skills<sup>12</sup>.

The following chart illustrates the qualification level of the population in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Figures have been provided both for total population and population by gender<sup>6</sup>.



Analysis of Herefordshire and Worcestershire Population by Highest Qualification Held, 2001

**GCSE Achievement** - Performance at GCSE for females in 2005 rose again in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire, continuing a trend over recent years. In both counties, the proportion of females gaining 5 A\*-C GCSEs was above the regional and national average.

Historically, males in the local area have underperformed when compared to females although this has always been at a level above the regional and national average. However, in 2005, there was actually a decline in the proportion of males achieving 5 A\*-C GCSEs, falling below both regional and national average performance.

The following table provides a breakdown and comparison of performance in 2004 and 2005 at GCSE 5 A\*-C<sup>13</sup>.

5 A*-C at GCSE (Level 2 equivalent)	2003/04			2004/05		
	Female	Male	Overall	Female	Male	Overall
England			53.7%			51.1%
West Midlands			50.8%			54.4%
Herefordshire and Worcestershire			55.5%			56.0%
Herefordshire	62.0%	53.2%	57.5%	63.3%	49.8%	56.7%
Worcestershire	60.9%	49.1%	54.9%	62.7%	48.9%	55.7%

**Young People Not Engaged in Education, Employment of Training (NEET)** – The number of young people not engaged in education, employment or training increased during 2005, to 6.2%, which included 5.9% of Year 11 school leavers in 2005. Of particular note is the proportion of young people in employment with no training.

By November 2006, the Connexions Herefordshire and Worcestershire target is to reduce the proportion of young people in the NEET group to 4.9%<sup>14</sup>.

Young People aged 16-18	Jan 2004	Jan 2005	Jan 2006
Not in Education, Employment or Training	1,430	1,074	1,192
In Employment with no Training	3,806	3,494	3,064

**E2E (Entry to Employment)** - During 2004/05, in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, 41% of leavers went into positive destinations, compared to 41% regionally and 44% nationally. This compares to an overall level of 40% in the two counties in the previous year 2003/04.

Of the 41% in Herefordshire and Worcestershire in 2004/05, 23% progressed into Further Education; 16% into Work-based Learning; and 61% went into employment.

In Herefordshire and Worcestershire in 2006/07, we will be seeking to achieve a positive destination rate of 52%, compared to a national aspiration of 50% by 2008.

#### **Skills Impact:**

Too many individuals have not achieved at least a Level 2 qualification.

Potential issues around progression to Level 3.

Underperformance by males / potentially increasing difference in performance between males and females at GCSE.

Growth in the number of young people in the NEET group; level of young people progressing into employment with no training.

## Post-16 Learning – Learner Numbers

**Young People in Learning** – Overall, in 2004/05 there was been an increase in the number of young people engaged in learning, equating to a growth of 8%<sup>15</sup>.

The table below provides a breakdown and comparison of young people in learning.

Young People aged 16-18 years old	2003/04	2004/05
School Sixth Form	4,370	4,680
Work-based Learning - Starts	1,385	1,317
Further Education - Enrolments	42,686	46,517

**MA PSA Starts Target** - 175,000 young people aged 16 to 21 entered an Apprenticeship for the first time in the 2004/05 academic year.

In Herefordshire and Worcestershire, during 2004/05, the Apprenticeship starts target was 2,144, against which 98% was achieved.

Of this 98% achievement, 62% of starts were within an Apprenticeship programme, 19% were within an Advanced Apprenticeship programme and 17% within Further Education programme led pathways.

**Adult (19 years old and Over) in Learning** – Overall, in 2004/05 there was a reduction in the number of adults (19 years old and Over) engaged in learning, which represented 8% shrinkage in the cohort size.

Adults aged 19 years old and Over	2003/04	2004/05
Work-based Learning - Starts	1,369	1,153
Further Education - Enrolments	74,785	68,713

**Equality and Diversity Overall Learner Numbers** – During 2004/05, 11% of learner enrolments, by individuals with a residential post-code in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, were from a non White British ethnic group.

## Post-16 Learning - Success Rates

**GCE/VCE/A/AS Level Achievement** – Performance at A Level (or equivalent) improved in 2005 over the previous year in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and for male and females.

Overall Performance in the two counties at this level in 2005 continued to be above the regional average. Performance in Herefordshire was above national average, both in terms of overall achievement and by males and females. In Worcestershire, females performed above and males performed slightly below the national average.

The following table provides a breakdown and comparison of performance at GCE/VCE/A/AS Level<sup>16</sup>.

GCSE/VCE/A/AS Average point score per candidate (Level 3 equivalent)	2003/2004			2004/2005		
	Female	Male	Overall	Female	Male	Overall
England	278.6	258.4	269.2	286.1	267.7	277.6
West Midlands	260.9	235.4	249.2	267.2	246.8	257.9
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	292.3	266.1	280.1	301.8	270.6	287.5
Herefordshire	335.8	299.6	319.6	335.9	306.9	322.9
Worcestershire	278.4	256.2	268.0	291.4	260.2	277.0

**Young People Success Rates** – In Herefordshire and Worcestershire during 2004-05, the overall success rate for Further Education was 79%, which exceeded both regional (71%) and national (61%) success rates. The overall success rate for Work-based Learning was 63%. This figure exceeded both regional (53%) and national (52%) success rates.

The following table provides a breakdown of success rates across all forms of provision for young people aged 16-18.

Young People aged 16-18	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Work-based Learning - Overall	46%	54%	63%
Work-based Learning – Framework only	28%	39%	49%
Further Education - Overall	68%	75%	79%
Further Education – Long Courses	67%	72%	78%
Further Education – Short Courses	78%	89%	87%

**PSA Target** - The new DfES/LSC performance indicator is to **increase the number of apprenticeship framework completions by 75% of the 2002/03 performance baseline**. This means nationally 75,500 apprentices completing their framework by 2007-08.

In Herefordshire and Worcestershire during 2004-05, 50% of framework completions were achieved. This compared to a level of 40% for the West Midlands region and 40% nationally.

By 2007-08, in Herefordshire and Worcestershire a minimum of 1,163 apprenticeship framework completions need to be achieved. Locally, milestones have been set to achieve 969 completions during 2005/06 and a further 1,066 completions during 2006/07.

**PSA Target - Attainment at Level 2 by age 19:** To increase the proportion of 19 year olds who achieve at least Level 2 by 3 percentage points between 2004 and 2006, and a further 2 percentage points between 2006 and 2008.

Within Herefordshire and Worcestershire during 2003-04, the percentage of learners who had reached the Level 2 threshold by age 19 was 69%. This was the highest level in the West Midlands region and above regional (64%) and national (67%) levels.



**Adults (age 19 years old and Over) Success Rates** – The overall success rate for Work-based Learning in 2004/05 was 59%, this compared to 52% regionally and 53% nationally. The overall success rate for Further Education increased by 2 percentage points to 82%, compared to 72% regionally and 73% nationally.

The following table provides a breakdown of success rates across all forms of provision for adults aged 19 years old and Over.

Adults aged 19 years old and Over	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Work-based Learning - Overall	44%	48%	59%
Work-based Learning – Framework only	23%	47%	56%
Further Education - Overall	75%	80%	82%
Further Education – Long Courses	58%	63%	67%
Further Education – Short Courses	86%	89%	90%

**PSA Target - Adult attainment at Level 2:** By 2010, to reduce by at least 40%, the number of adults in the workforce without a Level 2 or equivalent qualification.

In Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the number of adult learners undertaking a full level increased by 11.4% year-on-year between 2004/05 and 2005/06 and despite a decrease in adult funding during 2006/07 the number of learners undertaking this type of provision has been maintained.

**PSA Target - Improvements in adult basic skills (literacy, language and numeracy):** Nationally, to improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010; with interim targets of 750,000 by 2004 and 1.5 million by 2007.

In Herefordshire and Worcestershire during 2005, 13,743 adults achieved a basic skills qualification against a target of 20,792 by 2006-07. This compares to 2004, where 8,091 people achieved a basic skills qualification against an initial target of 9,927.

#### **Skills Impact:**

Issues relating to the retention of young people with higher level skills within Herefordshire and Worcestershire either post-18 or returning after higher education out-of-county.

Availability and range of opportunities for progression by young people post-18 onto vocational learning pathways.

Too many adults aged 19 and over have low levels of literacy, language and numeracy. Continued need to raise basic skills levels in the adult population.

Need to develop measure and monitor a range of equality and diversity impact measures that reflect the local context for working.

**Skills Gaps** - According to the findings of the National Employer Skills Survey 2005<sup>17</sup>, 11% of employees in Herefordshire and Worcestershire have a skill gap.

Extensive analysis has been undertaken to identify employer skills needs including the local Strategic Area Review, National Employer Skills Survey, and Regional Skills Assessment and work done by the Sector Skills Councils. Across the range of industrial and service sectors commonly identified skills needs relate to Level 2 and Level 3 skills and qualifications, Management and Leadership, Language Literacy and Numeracy.

Of particular note is the identified need to develop more flexible and responsive forms of delivery and assessment, such as the assess-train-assess methodology already operating in the construction sector.

In terms of generic skills, as part of the National Employer Skills Survey 2004<sup>18</sup>, employers were asked to identify the range of skills gaps occurring amongst employees who were lacking proficiency. The following table shows the five most commonly cited skills gaps identified as lacking by occupation.

<b>Five most commonly cited skills gaps identified by employers as lacking by occupational area</b>	<b>Managers and Senior Officials</b>	<b>Professional and Technical Occupations</b>	<b>Associate Professional and Technical Occupations</b>	<b>Administrative and Secretarial Occupations</b>	<b>Skilled Trades Occupations</b>	<b>Personal Service Occupations</b>	<b>Sales and Customer Service Occupations</b>	<b>Machine and Transport Operatives Occupations</b>	<b>Elementary Occupations</b>
Communication Skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Customer Handling Skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Team Working Skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical and Practical Skills		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
General IT User Skills	✓			✓			✓		
Management Skills	✓	✓	✓						
Office Admin. Skills				✓					
Literacy Skills					✓	✓		✓	✓
Numeracy Skills								✓	

### **Key messages from Herefordshire and Worcestershire Strategic Area Review<sup>19</sup>**

- There is a need to address the identified gaps in provision e.g. vocational curriculum in schools, specialist provision that meets the needs of the local economy, pre-entry level 2 provision and provision that supports learners from under-represented and vulnerable groups.
- There is a need and opportunity for increasing the flexibility of provision in order to enable learners to move more easily between different kinds of learning.
- There is a need for increased collaboration between the providers of learning and skills development.
- There is a need to address the infrastructure issues and sustainability of post-16 learning provision in Herefordshire.
- There is a need to further improve the responsiveness of local provision to meet the current and future skills needs of employers.
- There is a need to raise overall skills levels, and in particular language, literacy and numeracy skills levels, in order to maintain the competitiveness of the local economy and improve the well-being of those who live and work in the local area.
- There is a continued need to drive upwards quality improvement in the delivery and management of learning and skills provision.

## Mix and Balance of Provision

The tables on pages 22-23 provide an analytical overview of Further Education and Work-based Learning provision in Herefordshire and Worcestershire during 2004/05. From these tables the following broad conclusions can be drawn.

### ***Further Education Learning Provision – Under 19 years old***

- Nearly a half (48.8%) of provision addresses high skills priorities and contributes to LSC targets and/or priorities.
- Currently 42% of target contributing provision addresses medium or low priority areas.
- There is a need to move away from provision that is no longer eligible for LSC funding, currently 2.2% of total provision.

### ***Further Education Learning Provision – 19 years old and Over***

- Only 28.3% of current provision contributes to LSC targets and/or priorities **and** targets high skills priorities.
- Currently 41% of target contributing provision targets medium or low priority areas.
- 60.8% of current provision targets high skills priorities, however, 8.0% of this provision is no longer eligible for funding and a further 24.4% only has the potential to contribute to LSC priorities.
- There is a need to move away from provision that is no longer eligible for LSC funding, currently 10.3% of total provision.

### ***Work-based Learning Provision – Under 19 years old***

- 86% of provision is Apprenticeships or Advanced Apprenticeships.
- 57% of current provision addresses high skills priorities.
- 32 % of provision addresses low skills priorities.

### ***Work-based Learning Provision – 19 years old and Over***

- 90% of provision is Apprenticeships or Advanced Apprenticeships.
- 68% of provision addresses high skills priorities.
- 12% of provision addresses low skills priorities.

## ***Learning Provision - Priority Sectors***

The following analyses are based on the range of subject sector areas which most closely relate to identified priority industrial and service sectors, details of which are provided below.

<b>Subject Sector Areas</b>	<b>Priority Industrial and Service Sectors</b>
FE - Business, Administration and Law	Business and Professional Services
WBL - Business administration, Management and Professional	
FE - Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	Construction
WBL - Construction	
FE - Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	Engineering and

WBL - Engineering, Technology and Manufacturing	
FE - Health, Public Service and Care	Health, Care and Public Sectors
WBL - Health, Social Care and Public Services	
FE - Retail and Commercial Enterprise	Retail
WBL - Retailing, Customer Services and Transportation	

**Further Education Enrolments** – During 2004/05, 17% of enrolments by young people aged 16-18 years old in Further Education were onto learning programmes that related to priority sectors. By comparison, 39% of enrolments by adults aged 19 years old and Over were onto learning programmes that related to priority sectors.

**Work-based Learning Average in Learning** - During 2004/05, and based on average in learning figures, 55% of young people aged 16-18 years old in Work-based Learning were enrolled on learning programmes that related to priority sectors. This compares with, 67% of adults aged 19 years and Over.

### **Learning Provision – Levels of Provision**

During 2004/05, the proportion of provision by level of learning was as shown in the table below.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Other	Entry
16-18 Year Olds	26%	22%	38%	0.2%	11%	3%
19 Years and Over	38%	18%	13%	3%	13%	15%
Total	33%	20%	23%	2%	12%	10%

Further research mapping levels of provision to regional priorities shows the following:

At Level 2, 69% of 16-18 provision and 52% of 19 years old and Over provision targeted high skills priorities. Furthermore, 14% of 16-18 provision and 16% of 19 years old and Over provision was set against low skills priorities.

Of the provision at Level 3, only 31% of 16-18 provision targeted high skills priorities. In contrast 52% of 19 years old and Over provision targeted high skills priorities. Around 29% of 16-18 provision and 21% of 19 years old and Over provision was set against low skills priorities.

At Level 4, 69% of 16-18 provision and 40% of 19 years old and Over provision targeted high skills priorities. 17% of 16-18 provision and 28% of 19 years old and Over provision was set against low skills priorities.

### **Franchised, Sub-contracted and Partnership Provision**

Overall, there were 115,230 enrolments onto Further Education programmes in 2004/05. 11.6% of these enrolments were franchised, sub-contracted or partnership provision, this equated to only 3.9% of total funding.

Of the 11.6% of enrolments, 3.3% was franchised to private sector training organisation, 6.2% was on a community basis whilst 2.1% was delivered by partnership provision.

Within the 16-18 cohort, only 1.1% was franchised or delivered by partnership provision. However, 18.7% of the 19 years old and Over cohort was franchised or delivered by partnership provision.

## Learning Infrastructure

Within Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the following range of LSC supported learning provision exists:

- 5 Colleges of Further Education;
- 6 Centres of Vocational Excellence: Chefs; Construction; Engineering, Design, Manufacture and Maintenance; Gas Safety; Farriery and Blacksmith; Management and Professional;
- 2 Specialist Colleges: Art and Design; Land Based Industries;
- 2 National Specialist Colleges for learners with learning difficulties and/or difficulties: RNIB; RCB;
- 2 Sixth Form Colleges;
- 26 School Sixth Form;
- 27 Work-based Learning (WBL) Providers;
- 2 Personal & Community Development Learning (PCDL) Providers.

## Quality of Provision

According to Inspection Grades, the quality of provision in Herefordshire and Worcestershire has improved significantly since 2001/02. The following table provides a breakdown and comparison of inspection grades achieved during 2001/02 and 2004/05.

Area of Learning Inspection Profile	2001/02	2004/05
Good / Excellent	44%	79%
Satisfactory	44%	19%
Unsatisfactory	12%	2%

## Capital Strategy

The LSC is committed to improving the post-16 capital infrastructure over the next ten years. Learning facilities appropriate to the 21<sup>st</sup> century are considered to be essential if we are to increase learner participation, retention and achievement rates and to engage more employers in learning activity.

A local LSC Capital Plan has been developed in co-operation with the other LSCs in the West Midlands region and will contribute to the regional capital strategy, which will be subject to approval by the LSC National Capital Committee. The plan covers the following areas:

- 1. Skills Agenda / Specialisms.
- 2. 14-19 / Learning Pathways.
- 3. Regeneration / Economic Development.
- 4. Rationalisation / Merger Provision.

The LSC Capital Plan was endorsed by our local LSC Council and has subsequently incorporated into the Regional Strategy which has been endorsed by the National LSC Capital Committee.

Local capital strategic priorities include:

- Hereford Learning Village - redevelop the Herefordshire College of Technology estate on Folly Lane, to provide world class facilities for learners and employers. The project will seek final confirmation of funding for phase 2 of the construction work, and the LSC will work closely with the College to ensure the building work is completed successfully;
- Higher Education Centre Feasibility Study (Hereford Learning Village Campus) - A review is planned to determine the viability and demand for a dedicated higher education facility in Herefordshire. This will build on the previous study carried out covering the Marches area. If sufficient demand is shown to exist, then it is possible that funding will be available from HEFCE for a project led by the University of Worcester;
- Worcester College of Technology Phase 2 redevelopment - the College is currently developing detailed plans to redevelop its estates. This will build on the initial work, which sought to update the buildings owned by the College, and address issues of accessibility. The next phase will achieve alignment of resources with the future plans of the College, particularly in terms of specialist curriculum development;
- Worcester Sixth Form College Phase 3 - building work incorporating additional science and technology support facilities needed to provide a better flow of trained workers to the science and technology sectors, sustaining the establishment and growth of hi-tech business at the southern end of the Central Technology Belt;
- Completion and upgrade of the remaining 'lower quality' facilities in the local area by 2010;
- Promotion of investment in capital infrastructure where there is a strategic educational need, incorporating 14-16 vocational centres;
- Work with partners on the development of a major learning library in Worcester City.

<b>Further Education - Priority and Provision Analysis Matrix for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004/05</b>								
<b>Under 19 years old</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>Medium</b>		<b>Low</b>		<b>Grand Total</b>	
	<b>£ and Enrols</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£ and Enrols</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£ and Enrols</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£ and Enrols</b>	<b>%</b>
Likely to contribute to LSC targets and/or priorities	22,719 £13,294,370	48.8	9,641 £10,437,450	20.7	6,733 £6,680,580	14.5	39,093 £30,412,400	84.0
Potential to contribute to LSC priorities	1,681 £1,193,475	3.6	278 £90,903	0.6	4,447 £51,163	9.6	6,406 £1,335,541	13.8
No longer eligible for LSC funding for new learners	816 £382,953	1.8	27 £5,841	0.1	174 £59,629	0.4	1,017 £448,423	2.2
Other (Ufi or unknown)	1 £1,032	0.0		0.0		0.0	1 £1,032	0.0
<b>16 -18 Enrolment Total</b>	<b>25,217</b>	<b>54.2</b>	<b>9,946</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>11,354</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>46,517</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>16 -18 Funding Total</b>	<b>£14,871,830</b>		<b>£10,534,194</b>		<b>£6,791,372</b>		<b>£32,197,396</b>	
<b>19 years old and Over</b>								
Likely to contribute to LSC targets and/or priorities	19,440 £9,558,525	28.3	10,077 £3,437,968	14.7	3,275 £2,845,514	4.8	32,792 £15,842,007	47.7
Potential to contribute to LSC priorities	16,772 £4,812,810	24.4	6,312 £1,022,518	9.2	5,754 £1,522,740	8.4	28,838 £7,358,068	42.0
No longer eligible for LSC funding for new learners	5,509 £892,448	8.0	54 £12,943	0.1	1,491 £175,282	2.2	7,054 £1,080,673	10.3
Other (Ufi or unknown)	29 £27,295	0.0		0.0		0.0	29 £27,295	0.0
<b>19 years old and Over Enrolment Total</b>	<b>41,750</b>	<b>60.8</b>	<b>16,443</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>10,520</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>68,713</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>19 years old and Over Funding Total</b>	<b>£15,291,078</b>		<b>£4,473,429</b>		<b>£4,543,536</b>		<b>£24,308,043</b>	

Work-based Learning - Priority and Provision Analysis Matrix for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004/05								
Under 19 years old	High		Medium		Low		Grand Total	
	£ and Participation	%	£ and Participation	%	£ and Participation	%	£ and Participation	% of Overall
Advanced Apprenticeship	583 £1,587,649	21	86 £177,379	2	322 £711,959	10	991 £2,476,987	33.0
Apprenticeship	1,136 £2,449,044	33	360 £576,932	8	446 £935,913	13	1,942 £3,961,889	53.0
NVQ Level 2 within WBL	59 £119,535	2	34 £65,793	1	59 £11,774	2	152 £297,101	4.0
NVQ Level 3 within WBL	15 £38,180	1	1 £355	0	16 £38,396	1	32 £76,931	1.0
NVQ Level 4 within WBL	6 £21,697	0	0 0	0	0 0	0	6 £21,697	0.0
E2E including NVQ Level 1	0 0	0	0 0	0	872 £581,116	8	872 £581,116	8.0
Other e.g. unclassified or prep.	0 0	0	0 0	0	0 0	0	0 0	0.0
Totals	1,799	57	481	11	1,715	32	3,995	100.0
	£4,216,105		£820,458		£2,379,156		£7,415,721	
19 years old and Over								
Advanced Apprenticeship	660 £1,587,074	36.0	236 £395,898	9.0	241 £269,798	7.0	1,137 £2,279,770	52.0
Apprenticeship	797 £1,142,659	26.0	361 £436,708	10.0	98 £101,933	2.0	1,256 £1,681,300	38.0
NVQ Level 2 within WBL	54 £51,092	1.0	24 £18,029	0.0	64 £57,091	1.0	142 £126,212	3.0
NVQ Level 3 within WBL	56 £98,847	2.0	19 £18,671	0.0	54 £75,025	2.0	129 £192,543	4.0
NVQ Level 4 within WBL	55 £91,253	2.0	0 £0	0.0	0 £0	0.0	55 £91,253	2.0
E2E including NVQ Level 1	6 £1,318	0.0	3 £9,854	0.0	13 £5,897	0.0	22 £17,069	0.0
Other e.g. unclassified or prep.	0 £0	0.0	0 £0	0.0	0 £0	0.0	0 £0	0.0
Totals	1,628	68.0	643	20.0	470	12.0	2,741	100.0
	£2,972,243		£879,160		£536,744		£4,388,147	



## The key changes needed

- To address local and regional priorities in order to optimise performance in terms of achievements at Level 2 and Level 3.
- Take action to reduce non National Qualification Framework (NQF) provision and increase proportion of provision contributing to high skills priorities and targets.

### Further Education

- Under 19 years old: increase by 10% the proportion of learning provision addressing high skills priorities;
- 19 years old and Over: increase provision for Skills for Life by 5%.  
Increase the proportion of provision at Level 2 by 5% and Level 3 by 10%.

### Work-based Learning

- Under 19 years old: increase by 5% the proportion of learning provision addressing high skills priorities;
- Review priorities within Other Provision.
- Review of Level 1 (agree maximum level).
- Respond to Sector Skills Agreements and national priorities of SEMTA, Business Improvement Techniques, e-Skills UK – Information Technology Qualification, ConstructionSkills - On-Site Assessment and Training, and Public Sector School Support Staff.
- Increase percentage/volume of part-time Level 2 adult provision within mainstream plan by 5% in line with Train to Gain priorities.
- Transition from local skills gateway and brokerage to regional arrangements.
- Support providers to adopt new delivery and assessment methodologies e.g. assess-train-assess, paperfree assessment, workplace delivery.
- Centres of Vocational Excellence/specialist providers - 10% minimum increase in volumes and funding for Level 3 as part of Train to Gain.
- Minimum 60% accredited Skills for Life. Local targets to be agreed for 2006/07 during planning process.
- Increase employer and individual contribution towards skills activity.
- Increase Apprenticeship Framework completions.
- Develop a 14-19 Prospectus for each consortium area.
- Accelerate progress of 14-19 consortia development.
- Increase collaborative cross-border working between Further Education and Work-based Learning Consortia, across Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- Develop vocational centres to increase availability of vocational curriculum choices for 14-19 year olds.
- Develop new specialist provision to meet regional and local employer needs.
- Grow provision to meet locally identified needs.
- Joint approach to capital planning with key partners e.g. AWM, HEFCE, Local Authorities.
- Ensure the smooth transition to new LSC internal working arrangements, including the integration of Herefordshire and Worcestershire local LSC and Shropshire local LSC.

## Sector Skill Agreements (SSAs)

The LSC's commitment within the SSA is to ensure that the provision purchased addresses the skills priorities within the Agreements. The following priority qualifications/areas have been identified:

- OSAT (On Site Assessment and Training)
- BIT (Business Improvement Techniques)
- ITQ (Information Technology Qualification)
- School Support Staff

### 1. Construction Skills

The On Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) delivery model for construction provision has been one of the most successful sector pilots. National funding will not continue beyond September 2006 and OSAT delivery now needs to be incorporated into mainstream provision. The figures identified below are the Construction Skills projections for the number of workers requiring an NVQ Level 2 within the region.

West Midlands Region	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
	3,214	4,046	3,503	3,503

### 2. SEMTA

UK companies lag behind competitors on the implementation of lean manufacturing and high performance working particularly SME's. SEMTA have identified the Business Improvement Techniques (BIT) NVQ as a key qualification in their Agreement which will progressively replace the NVQs in Performing Engineering Manufacture.

The figures identified below are the projections for the number of employees requiring an NVQ Level 2 and Level 3 within the region over the coming year.

West Midlands Region	Level 2	Level 3
	10,800	1,350

### 3. E- Skills

The SSA priorities focus on Level 2 and above for IT users and Level 3 and above for IT professionals delivered through ITQ. This provides a highly flexible framework to enable individuals to achieve a qualification. It is intended that ITQ will replace all IT User qualifications by September 2006. The target ITQ is for 750,000 ITQ by 2008 and the regional target is shown below.

West Midlands Region	2006/2007	2007/2008
	17,600	22,400

#### **4. Additional Priorities – School Support Staff**

School support staff work across a number of occupational areas, often with multiple roles. Job roles include administrators, teaching assistants, technicians and pupil supervisors.

The figures identified below are the sector's projections for the number of employees requiring an NVQ Level 2 within the region over the next two years 2006/07 and 2007/08.

<b>West Midlands Region</b>	<b>2006/2007</b>	<b>2007/2008</b>
	1550	1550

# What we have delivered so far and our planned changes for 2006/07 (sheet 1 of 2)

SUMMARY OF YOUNG PEOPLE (16-18)	2004/05				Funding £
	Learners		In-year achievement / volume (%)		
	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
FE Total Learners	9,950				35,015,287
of which...					
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	5,164	3,337	64.6		
Learners on a full Level 2 qualification	1,653	1,121	67.8		
Learners on a full Level 3 qualification	5,034	2,952	58.6		
Learners on 2 or more A2 quals	1,348	1,143	84.8		
Discrete* activity, e.g. fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision	241	103	42.7		
School sixth form					
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AIL (%)		Funding £
WBL Total Learners	543				6,842,218
of which...					
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	455	303	66.6		
Learners on an Apprenticeship	371	120	32.3		
Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship	172	45	26.2		
Entry to Employment	Learners			Pos've destinations	Funding £
	Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)		
All E2E	195	272	26	79	2,296,283

2005/06				
Learners		In-year achievement / volume (%)		Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
11,169				40,115,144
5,372	3556	66.2		
1,956	1329	68.0		
5,259	3180	60.5		
1,426	1225	85.9		
409	418	102.2		
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AIL (%)		Funding £
2,710				7,263,944
2497	946	37.9		
1,948	542	27.8		
617	228	37.0		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations	
617	834	20	303	2,441,623

2006/07				
Learners		In-year achievement / volume (%)		Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
11,240				40,400,732
5,478	3773	68.9		
2,079	1422	68.4		
5,370	3214	59.9		
1,484	1290	86.9		
244	306	125.4		
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AIL (%)		Funding £
2,790				8,044,914
2763	1111	40.2		
2,188	654	29.9		
675	305	45.2		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations	
779	983	21	381	2,558,472

Green header indicates underpinning data is complete

Red header indicates underpinning data is incomplete

## What we have delivered so far and our planned changes for 2006/07 (sheet 2 of 2)

SUMMARY OF ADULTS (19+)	2004/05				2005/06				2006/07			
	Learners		In-year achievement / volume (%)	Funding £	Learners		In-year achievement / volume (%)	Funding £	Learners		In-year achievement / volume (%)	Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievement s (volume)	Volumes of learners			In-year achievements (volume)	Volumes of learners			In-year achievements (volume)			
FE Total Learners	43,380			20,559,418	42,121			20,527,064	40,665			20,607,428
of which...												
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	2,747	2,054	74.8		2,782	2,165	77.8		2,971	2,254	75.9	
Learners on a full Level 2 qualification	1,575	997	63.3		1,754	1,065	60.7		1,739	1,001	57.6	
Learners on a full Level 3 qualification	3,296	1,637	49.7		3,275	1,546	47.2		3,347	1,577	47.1	
Learners on 2 or more A2 qual.	76	53	69.7		73	51	69.8		64	37	57.8	
Discrete* activity, eg fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision	1938	1938	100		2055	1667	81.1		1532	1549	101.1	
Personal & Community Dev't Learning												
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievement s (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AIL (%)	Funding £	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AIL (%)	Funding £	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AIL (%)	Funding £
WBL Total Learners	378			3,678,691	2,000			3,378,645	2,309			3,705,432
of which...												
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications)	151	101	66.9		832	316	40.0		921	370	40.2	
Learners on an Apprenticeship	208	43	20.7		974	355	36.4		1,147	426	37.1	
Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship	170	35	20.6		555	207	37.3		729	294	40.3	
ETP / NETP	Volumes of learners		In-year achievements (volume)	Funding £	Volumes of learners		In-year achievements (volume)	Funding £	Volumes of learners		In-year achievements (volume)	Funding £
Of which...												
Level 2	0		0		415		113		903		605	
Skills for Life	0		0									
Budgets	FE	WBL	E2E	SSF	PCDL	ETP/NETP	Development Funding	Capital	Administration	Other		
2004/05	61,153,084	10,241,398	2,384,820	22,224,425	1,027,009	-	-	-	-	-		
2005/06	65,843,196	10,596,722	2,500,014	23,968,500	1,227,009	-	-	-	-	-		
2006/07	67,244,163	12,626,821	2,339,3973	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		

## Key Actions

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
<b>NP1 - Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality and relevant learning opportunities</b>	To ensure the establishment and operation of 14-19 Consortia across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.	Scope of activity previously supported through Learning Partnerships embedded within consortia arrangements - January 2007.
		Prospectus for each consortia area in place for roll-out and promotion of 14-19 entitlement - December 2006.
	To support the development and implementation of a <i>Clearing House</i> for Year 11 learners.	<i>Clearing House</i> operating in at least 2 geographic areas (Herefordshire and Wyre Forest) - January 2007.
	To ensure the further development of a diverse curriculum by requesting 14-19 consortia to undertake feasibility studies into the potential for the development of 14-19 vocational centres within schools in the local area.	Outcomes and recommendations arising from feasibility studies considered and priority actions identified - November 2006.
		Any remaining gaps in vocational provision identified, and plans put in place to address them through building the capacity of existing providers or by bringing in new provision - March 2007.
		Imaginative use of Dedicated Schools Grant by schools and local authorities in support of practical Key Stage 4 provision. Agreement for funding arrangements – May 2006.
	In collaboration with key partners, reduce the number of young people in the not in education, employment or training (NEET) group.	To ensure that the proportion of young people not progressing into education, training or employment with training does not exceed 4.9% - November 2006.
		Increased volumes of the following to be agreed during 2006/07 planning process – June 2006: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further Education provision at Foundation Level;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre E2E provision;</li> <li>E2E provision.</li> </ul>
	In collaboration with key partners, reduce the number of young people in employment with no training.	<p>To decrease the proportion of young people in employment with no training by 2 percentage points – December 2006.</p> <p>In collaboration with key partners, particularly Connexions and 14-19 Consortia, ensure awareness and uptake by increased proportions of 16/17 year old cohorts of Further Education / Work-based Learning / School Sixth Forms – March 2007.</p>
	In collaboration with key partners, address the outcomes of Area Wide Inspection (AWI) and Joint Area Review (JAR) in Herefordshire.	<p>Annual Report reviewed by LSC National Office and DfES – January 2007.</p> <p>Collective targets for improvements agreed – June 2006.</p>
	To ensure that capital planning fully reflects local needs arising from the 16-19 agenda.	<p>Local Capital Plan endorsed by local LSC Council - January 2007.</p> <p>Outcome of vocational centre feasibility studies incorporated in revisions of Capital Plan - January 2007.</p>
	To ensure that the Plans of the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership and the Safeguarding Board fully reflect 14-19 learning agenda.	<p>Learning and skills to be included as key strategic areas and actions within Strategic Plan produced by the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership and the Safeguarding Board – April 2006.</p>
	To address the needs of vulnerable young people by supporting activities that aim to ensure the re-engagement of 14-16 year olds in learning.	<p>1000 individuals on Vocational Inclusion and Participation Programme – September 2006 targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>225 Work placements;</li> <li>375 Positive progressions;</li> <li>375 Accredited qualifications.</li> <li>137 individuals on Alternative Learning Pathways Programme –</li> </ul>

		<p>September 2006 targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 125 Work placements;</li> <li>▪ 105 Positive progressions;</li> <li>▪ 136 Accredited qualifications.</li> </ul>
	To support the Review of post-16 provision in Worcester City.	Public consultation completed, Review completed and Recommendations made – October 2006.
<b>NP2 - Make learning truly demand-led so that it meets the needs of employers, young people and adults.</b>	Support successful roll-out of <i>Train to Gain</i> (National Employer Training Programme) across local area from August 2005.	Achieve the successful migration of the Skills Station operational functions to the new regional integrated 'Gateway' service – March 2007.
		Increase assessor capacity in readiness for <i>Train to Gain</i> (National Employer Training Programme) – March 2007.
		Support regional Level 3 Pilot of <i>Train to Gain</i> (National Employer Training Programme) – August 2006.
	Support the on-going development and usage of the 5 Industrial Estate Learning Zones within the sub-region.	Delivery of additional Skills for Life qualifications, and Level 2 qualifications (Target to be agreed June 06) – March 2007.
		Achieve 30 Skills for Life qualifications, and 50 Level 2 qualifications through ESF targeted training in Leominster – March 2007.
	Increase provision in line with priorities identified within local Procurement Plan.	247 business start-ups supported through Objective 3 Business Start-Up programme – March 2007.
	Address skills issues arising from Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ) Enterprise Centre Network.	Delivery of 35 NVQs in manufacturing and engineering in Herefordshire – March 2007.
		ESF Herefordshire Community Learning will deliver 43 Level 1 and Level 3 Skills for Life qualifications in Kington, Leominster and Ledbury – March 2007. (Programme continues to February 2008).



	Targeted support to address low skills levels in identified deprived local areas identified through local Strategic Area Review.	<p>The ESF Worcestershire Widening Access and Participation Project will deliver through Fairfield Multi Agency Resource Centre and Oldington and Foley Park REDI and YMCA Centres to get low skilled individuals back into learning and/or employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100 into learning – December 2006;</li> <li>▪ 60 into employment – February 2007.</li> </ul> <p>(Programme continues to December 2007.)</p>
		Personal Development and Community Learning funding levels agreed as part of the planning process – May 2006.
	Skills for Life/Continuing Professional Development Centre (CPD).	Skills for Life target of 3,000 achievements - July 2006.
		Revised CPD centre delivery arrangements agreed and in place for the 2006/07 operational year - April 2006.
	Address the learning needs of individuals from minority ethnic groups in order to achieve parity of achievement and skills levels.	Agree improvement plans as part of development plan process – May 2006 and monitoring and review through 2006/07 – November 2006 and January 2007.
		Baselines established within a local set of Equality and Diversity Impact Measures – June 2006.
	Work with key partners in order to identify appropriate strategies to address the skills needs of individuals with learning difficulties and / or disabilities.	Support individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into learning and employment through the regional pre-recruitment and employment programme (Target to be agreed June 06) – March 2007.
	Address the learning needs of older workers (aged 50+ years old) in order to achieve parity of achievement and skills levels.	<p>1350 older workers supported into learning and employment through the regional pre-recruitment programme – March 2007. (Programme continues to April 2008).</p>
		Baselines established within a local set of Equality and Diversity Impact Measures – June 2006.

	Work with key partners to identify appropriate strategies to address the skills needs of migrant workers.	Identify opportunity for joint conference with partners – April 2006.
		450 migrant workers supported into learning and employment through the regional pre-recruitment programme – March 2007. (Programme continues to April 2008).
	Maintain AimHigher Activity	Agree the priorities and content of the local Aim Higher Plan - June 2006.
	Address Higher Education (HE) provision issues through the development of a dedicated HE centre on the Folly Lane Campus, Hereford.	Establish a capital steering group to bid for new HE Centre – June 2006.  Discussions with Higher Education Funding Council for England regarding investment of £4 million linked to Hereford Learning Village – April 2006.
<b>NP3 - Transform the learning and skills agenda through agenda for change.</b>	To achieve improvements in differentiated local success rates for young people and 19 years old and over, long and short courses.	Undertake and establish sector subject area success rates by Provider – July/August 2006.
		Negotiate and agree improvement targets – September 2006.
	Extend network of specialist provision to compliment existing provider specialisms within the Region.	Agree new areas of provider specialisms – May 2006.
	Implement the decision of the local LSC Council regarding the outcomes of the Pershore Group of Colleges Options Review.	Meet with Pershore Group of Colleges senior management team - May 2006. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce draft reorganisation timeline.</li> <li>• Nominate LSC Project Manager.</li> </ul>
		Initial Outline Proposal – September 2006.  Due diligence Review – September 2006.

		Public Consultation – Autumn 2006.
	Progress the implementation of the Hereford Learning Village.	Stage 2 Proposal to local LSC Capital Committee – October 2006.
		Construction contractor appointed – November 2006.
		Site construction to have started - September 2006.
<b>NP4 - Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs.</b>	Participate effectively with local partners in the development and implementation of Local Area Agreements, ensuring an appropriate focus on the learning and skills agenda.	Key 14-19 LSC targets on NEET (not engaged in education, employment or training) group and Framework completions in both County Local Area Agreements – April 2006.
		Key adult targets on Skills for Life and Level 2 included in both County Local Area Agreements – April 2006.
		Achieve the contracted outputs (300) of Worcester College of Technology ESF Employer Training Programme and successful roll-out of ESF Level 2 Training Programme – March 2007.
		Achieve the contracted outputs (300) of Worcester College of Technology ESF Adult Apprenticeship Programme – March 2007.
	Address the skills issues arising from a range of key capital projects taking place within the sub-region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abbey Stadium, Redditch;</li> <li>▪ Bromsgrove Technology Park;</li> <li>▪ Edgar Street Grid/Hereford Learning Village, Hereford;</li> </ul>	Increase the number of On-Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) Level 2 completions in the sub-region to support the Construction Sector. Volumes to be agreed during 2006/07 planning process 2006/07 – June 2006.
		Increase adult Level 2 retail provision through ESF funding by 79 to support major retail sector developments – March 2007. FE volumes to be agreed during 2006/07 planning process – June 2006.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leominster Enterprise Park;</li> <li>▪ Malvern Hills Science Park;</li> <li>▪ University of Worcester Library.</li> </ul>	<p>110 individuals supported to gain NVQ Level 2 in Business Improvement Techniques (BIT) through ESF funding – March 2007.</p> <p>FE volumes to be agreed during 2006/07 planning process – June 2006.</p>
		<p>25 individuals supported to gain Information Technology Qualification (ITQ) through ESF funding – March 2007.</p> <p>FE volumes to be agreed in 2006/07 planning process – June 2006.</p>
	Jobcentre Plus – Employer offer	Integrate local Jobcentre Plus actions into regional Action Plan – 2006/07.
	Collaborate with Jobcentre Plus in responding to the impact of the closure of Rover.	Delivery of the Employment Support package to 600 ex-MG Rover workers – August 2006.
<b>NP5 - Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services.</b>	School Support Staff	30 School Support Staff supported into learning and employment through the regional programme – March 2007.
		Teaching Assistants Apprenticeship Framework volumes to be agreed during 2006/07 planning process – June 2006.
	Worcester College of Technology – homelessness initiative	Delivery of NVQ Level 2 working with homeless and vulnerable people – March 2007.
	NHS Compact	Agree action plan and key projects – June 2006.
		Agree transitional arrangements to regional skills co-ordination – June 2006.
	Local Authority Compact	Agree action plan and key projects – June 2006.
		Agree transitional arrangements to regional skills co-ordination – June 2006.

<b>NP6 - Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.</b>	ESF – manage regional budgets.	Contracts in place for 80% of the regional budget – July 2006.
	ESF – Contracting in line with co-financing plan profiles.	Contracts for 80% of the Co-financing Plan targets outputs – July 2006.
	Improve planning processes alignment with regional and local business cycle to ensure the improved planning by providers.	Local Strategic Briefing – December 2006.
		Provider annual reviews – January 2007.
		Provider annual plans produced and provisional allocations agreed – January/February 2007.
	Provide support for Governors in colleges.	Investigate the possibility of a series of Governor training events during 2006/07 after consulting the views of Principles Consortium.
	Champion the role and importance of sustainable development within the learning sector through the development of the curriculum, learning materials and embedding consideration of sustainability within working practices.	Every provider to include its priorities for sustainable development within its institutional plan – May 2006, with progress to be reviewed – January 2007.
		An <i>Action Plan for Sustainability</i> to be produced by the local office in conjunction with regional guidance – March 2007.
	Implement agreed actions in order to realise Theme 7 of <i>Agenda for Change</i> .	Effective integration with Shropshire office – July 2006.
	Ensure the smooth transition of functions and processes into new regional structure and working arrangements.	Roles and responsibilities transferred to relevant teams within new structure – June 2006.
	Maintain Investors in People (IiP) standards.	Review processes and procedures following LSC restructure – July 2006.

## **Our Delivery Resources**

### **LSC Capacity**

As part of the *agenda for change*<sup>18</sup>, the Learning and Skills Council is implementing a programme of internal transformational change. New working arrangements will come into operation within the LSC during 2006/07. Herefordshire and Worcestershire LSC will be merged with Shropshire LSC to form one operating area, allowing for improved co-ordination of activity across the western half of the West Midlands Region. Within this arrangement, two dedicated Partnership Teams (one for Herefordshire and one for Worcestershire) will be established. Other functions will adopt a regional approach to working.

### **Partnership Working**

We recognise that the most efficient use of resources and effective working can be achieved thorough collaboration with our key partners. Joint working to achieve our priorities will include working with:

- Local Strategic Partnerships:
  - Herefordshire Partnership;
  - Worcestershire Partnership; and
  - Six Worcestershire District Partnerships.
- Local Area Agreements;
- Local Authorities, through:
  - Childrens' Services;
  - Children and Young People Strategic Partnership and Safeguarding Board;
  - developing a joint approach and shared vision for Economic Development;
- Consortia – Further Education, Work-based learning, 14-19, Voluntary Sector;
- Local Employer Partnerships;
- NHS Compact
- Local Authorities Compact;
- Connexions;
- Jobcentre Plus;
- Higher Education Integrated Partnership Board;
- Herefordshire Youth Council.

### **Local LSC Council**

During 2006/07, we will be capitalising on the expertise of council members in order to use them more effectively in promoting the aims and activities of the LSC as set out in this plan.

We have now recruited a number of new members which brings the membership up to the recommended levels for both business sector and female members. We will conduct an audit of skills and network membership and identify any gaps in knowledge which need to be addressed, in order for the members to act as effective ambassadors for the LSC.

During 2006/07, we will be creating closer links with the Council and Audit Committee at Shropshire LSC to help with the transition to a single LSC office for this area. This will

include co-ordination of meetings and joint review of key documents. We will also be running joint development sessions for Council Members on the roll-out of key initiatives.

### **European Social Fund (ESF)**

The six Learning and Skills Councils in the West Midlands have joined together for the first time to manage the UK's first regional co-financing scheme to deliver the European Social Fund (ESF). During 2006/07 we will seek to procure activity worth approximately £60m across the region. This funding will be used to address both regional and local skills issues.

ESF focuses on improving people's skills and employment opportunities. It is aimed at helping three key groups:

- social minorities and excluded groups – including, helping long term unemployed, people with disabilities, minority ethnic groups, ex-offenders and people lacking basic skills needed to get a job;
- businesses – helping to boost workforce productivity and the West Midlands economy by supporting the Regional Skills Partnership aim to develop a highly and appropriately skilled workforce;
- local communities – helping to cut unemployment and benefit claims, upskilling communities and helping them to become more sustainable in the long term.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The Council will ensure that planned activities take account of its duty to promote equality of opportunity in relation to race, gender and disability and our responsibilities under other equality legislation including the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and European regulations relating to sexual orientation, religion or faith and age (due to come into effect in 2006). Our actions and activities which are covered in this plan will be underpinned by and reflect the Council's Race Equality Scheme.

The Learning and Skills Council recognises its statutory duties under Race Equality legislation and emerging duties around Disability and Gender Equality. The local office will work in partnership with colleagues at Regional and National level to support the process of Equality Impact Assessments across all functional areas.

Following local research, undertaken in 2005/06, the following have been identified as important development issues for 2006/07:

- use of the Race Equality in Employment Standard as the means of enabling colleges and other providers to review their policies and practice and to introduce improvements as necessary. This work will be taken forward in conjunction with the Training Providers' Association and the College Principals Forum;
- as apart of their planning approach, the emergent 14-19 consortia will be required to establish effective partnership working within their local communities, to ensure effective school/post-16 links and enable black and minority ethnic learners to make more appropriate post-16 choices;
- given the low proportion of ethnic minority population within the local area, a targeted approach for establishing measures will be developed focusing on those geographic areas where there are higher concentrations of ethnic minority population, namely Redditch and Worcester City;
- as the impact of an ageing population is a critical issue for the local area, specific measures targeting older workers, including the establishment of appropriate baselines, targets and milestones for improvement in participation in learning and skills levels;

- migrant workers have become an important element of the workforce within the local area and this trend is likely to continue. In collaboration with key strategic partners, specific measures will be developed to address skills issues arising, including the establishment of appropriate baselines, targets and milestones for improvement;
- development of appropriate interventions to address gender imbalance in terms of participation in learning and success rates, including the establishment of appropriate baselines, targets and milestones for improvement;
- across the post-16 sector in Herefordshire and Worcestershire providers need to make more effective use of data in target setting and action planning;
- providers will be increasingly required to assess the impact of their Race Equality Schemes and other equality measures, through effective consultation with staff and students/learners.

### **LSC Workforce Diversity Goals**

The following table provides detail of the LSC's Workforce Diversity Goals and the LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire workforce profile as of September 2005.

<b>LSC Workforce Diversity Goals</b>	<b>Actual Proportion of local LSC workforce – September 2005</b>	<b>Goal by 2010</b>
Proportion of LSC employees who consider themselves to have a disability or limiting illness.	3.64%	7.5%
Proportion of the LSC's workforce from non-white minority ethnic groups.	1.82%	3%
Proportion of the LSC's senior roles (Band 3 or above) from non-white minority ethnic groups.	0.00%	5.55%
Proportion of women in senior roles (Band 3 or above).	73.33%	51%
Proportion of men in Band 1 roles.	18.18%	32%

### **Learners with Learning Difficulties and / or Disabilities**

The Region has commissioned a review of provision and support for learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD). This Review, chaired by the Executive Director for Coventry and Warwickshire, will bring forward recommendations for the development of provision to better meet the needs of learners within the region, as far as is possible, for the further development of the network of specialist providers to meet the needs of those who need specialist and residential provision, and for development work to improve the ability of mainstream providers to meet the needs of a wider range of LLDD learners.

In addition, the region is working with the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) to develop a support strategy for learners with visual impairments and is hosting a secondee from National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) to coordinate the West Midlands Mental Health Network.

### **Learning for Offenders and those at risk of re-offending**

The West Midlands region assumes responsibility for learning and skills in custody from the 1<sup>st</sup> of August and already has responsibility for the offenders in the community. The rationale for the transfer of responsibility to the LSC is to create an integrated approach to



the delivery of Learning and Skills. This is to be achieved by improving the quality and consistency of provision and in custody, to deliver learning equivalent to the mainstream. The region is divided into three partnership sub areas in order to manage the new arrangements. There is also a regional board and operational group linked to the cross government priority of reducing re-offending. Each local office currently has an 'offender lead' who has been working with the Regional Team to establish effective partnerships in custody and the community. There are thirteen prison establishments and four probation areas in the region.

## **Sustainable Development**

The LSC has a huge opportunity to make a difference to sustainable development. If the messages and actions of our own organisation, those with which we work, and the learners which we fund could be adapted, then we have a strong role to play. In 2005, we published a strategy for sustainable development, *From Here to Sustainability*.

Our vision is that the learning and skills sector will proactively commit and contribute to sustainable development through its management of resources, the learning opportunities it delivers and its engagement with communities.

In order to do this we must address the issues around environmental sustainability and use our influence, funding and approaches to achieve this vision. Although sustainable development is about much more than halting climate change and environmental considerations, tackling this agenda will go along way to making the LSC's vision a reality. The West Midlands is playing a strong lead in ensuring that the issues are addressed in a robust and meaningful way as follows:

- ensuring that our own, and our provider's internal ways of working are environmentally sustainable e.g. converting to more environmentally friendly fuel options, adopting the principles of reducing, reusing and recycling waste;
- ensuring that the principles of sustainability are embedded into the curriculum and qualifications which we fund e.g. by requiring learners to undertake the sustainability option where there is currently a choice within the qualification. Further examples relate to using each curriculum area to further learners understanding of climate change issues through relevant issues within their chosen vocations e.g. better construction methods, treatment of chemicals for hairdressers;
- ensuring that we are building the principles into our skills strategy by making the link between sustainability and the industries important to it. For example, recognising the need of employers within the renewable energy sector;
- sourcing examples of good practice and using this as a basis for further awareness raising.

## **Health and Safety**

The health and safety of learners is a fundamental value for the Learning and Skills Council. We believe that learners are entitled to learning that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. Our policy is to adopt a best practice role with regard to the promotion of learner health and safety, by applying the following four core principles:

- to expect that colleges and other providers funded by the Learning and Skills Council will fully meet their legal obligations and duty of care to learners;
- to seek assurance that colleges and other providers have suitable and sufficient arrangements for learner health and safety;
- to take appropriate action where expected standards are not met or maintained; and
- to promote the raising of standards for learner health and safety through support, and challenge, as appropriate.

## End notes and References:

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- <sup>1</sup> Transforming learning and skills: Our Annual Statement of Priorities, November 2005.
  - <sup>2</sup> Regional Economic Strategy
  - <sup>3</sup> Sub-National Population Projections, 2006 (2004 base)
  - <sup>4</sup> Regional Trends 38, Office for National Statistics
  - <sup>5</sup> Annual Population Survey, April 2004 – March 2005
  - <sup>6</sup> Census 2001, Crown Copyright
  - <sup>7</sup> Working Futures II. LSC internal data analyses based on sources such as Annual Business Inquiry and National Employer Skills Survey, 2005.
  - <sup>8</sup> Office for National Statistics
  - <sup>9</sup> Claimant Count, Office for National Statistics
  - <sup>10</sup> Department for Work and Pensions
  - <sup>11</sup> Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2004
  - <sup>12</sup> Regional Skills Assessment – A Herefordshire and Worcestershire Perspective, 2005
  - <sup>13</sup> GCSE and equivalent results and Associated Value Added Measures in England, Statistical First Release, 2003/04 and 2004/05
  - <sup>14</sup> Herefordshire and Worcestershire Connexions
  - <sup>15</sup> Scorecard, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Learning and Skills Council
  - <sup>16</sup> GCE VCE A/AS Examination Results for Young People in England, Statistical First Release, 2003/04 and 2004/05
  - <sup>17</sup> National Employer Skills Survey, 2005
  - <sup>18</sup> National Employer Skills Survey, 2004
  - <sup>19</sup> Final report on the outcomes of the Strategic Area Review undertaken in Herefordshire and Worcestershire (Local LSC, June 2005).
  - <sup>18</sup> Learning and Skills – the *agenda for change* the Prospectus. August 2005.

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